Incident or Event

An Ontario automotive company has been fined $45,000, plus a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge after two workers were injured when a vehicle fell to the ground.

Outcomes

The vehicle was raised approximately six feet in the air and the workers were standing underneath the vehicle doing repairs. The vehicle suddenly fell off the hoist to the floor. Both workers suffered critical injuries.

Causal Factors

Negligent Maintenance
Examination of the arm restraints revealed that the gears that were supposed to lock the arms in place were not functioning properly. The teeth on the gears were worn, rusted and in poor condition and the metal bars that hold the restraints together were bent. Restraint devices had not functioned properly for an extended period of time. Pads on the swing arms were found to be worn and in poor condition.

No Inspections
The company had not provided the workers with any information or instruction on inspection requirements and had not trained or instructed the workers on how to inspect the hoists. As a result, there was no regular maintenance routine in place for the hoists.

Inspectors Not Qualified
An external company had previously been hired to inspect all hoists at the workplace. The inspections were primarily visual and lasted approximately 15 minutes per hoist. The company indicated that there were no defects in the hoists and that they were fit to use. The company nor its owner was considered a qualified inspector as per the ALI (Automotive Lift Institute) standards.

Shared Learning

Maintenance – Planned maintenance will be completed as per the recommendations of the hoist manufacturer as to the frequency whether it be daily, weekly, monthly, semi-annually, annually or on some other basis. Maintenance must only be performed by a qualified maintenance personal who have the training and knowledge.

Daily Inspections – The hoist operator shall inspect the hoist daily and document it. Some considerations when preforming a daily inspection are:

- Deformation or excessive wear of components such as hoses, electrical wires, drive chains, wire rope or screws.
- Damage or excessive wear on any of the lift contact points which engage the vehicle during lifting.
- Evidence of hydraulic or pneumatic leaks.
- Unusual noises, sudden movements, or erratic operation.
- Cracked or loose concrete around the floor anchor bolts.

Qualified Inspector – Ensure the inspector hired to annually (at a min) inspect the hoists is qualified to do so. Some important qualifications are:

- Familiarity with industry terminology including the terms defined and used in ANSI/ALI ACLCTV.
- Knowledge of personal safety practices necessary to perform routine and periodic inspections of existing equipment.
- Ability to read and understand equipment manuals, drawings, and parts lists.
- Working knowledge in electrical and electronic control circuit, mechanical, hydraulic and pneumatic principles.
- Knowledge of the many and varied types and styles of automotive lifts, their uses an any limitations or restricted applications.

Discussion

Leaders should review the above at a meeting and use the following questions to engage their teams to identify similar hazards. Leaders should note answers, follow up, implement corrective actions, and positively reinforce worker responsiveness.

1. Where do we have similar hazards (Hoists)?

_____

2. Where do we or have we performed similar tasks or processes?

_____

3. Which of the causes associated with the incident are common in our facility?

_____

4. Where else can we apply the shared learning?

_____

5. For any similar hazards in our workplace, what is the level of risk?

_____

Likelihood	Likely	Medium Risk	High Risk	Extreme Risk
	Unlikely	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
	Highly Unlikely	Minimal Risk	Low Risk	Medium Risk
		Slightly Harmful	Harmful	Extremely Harmful
		Consequences		

6. What can we do to eliminate or reduce the risk?

Hazard	Risk (R/Y/G)	Control Plan	Due Date

SIGN: Workers Involved in this Shared Learning exercise:

Name	Signature	Date